

Quality Teaching in Science

Knowledge of science and the development of the scientific attitude have always been important in the secondary school program, but never more important than today. From the science classrooms in North Carolina go each year potential scientists, science teachers, doctors, technicians, political leaders, and thinkers for tomorrow. In the realization of this fact, is it too much to expect science teachers to be challenged by the tremendous possibilities which each year come to them through their subject areas and through their pupils?

For 180 days the science teacher and the pupils are together. In itself this fact seems too commonplace to arouse any degree of excitement; yet when one considers what might be accomplished during these 180 days, there is every reason for excitement and genuine optimism.

What are the goals of the science teacher? Of the pupils studying science? To what degree are teacher and pupil goals coincident? What subject areas will be of most interest and use to those enrolled in classes? How shall these subjects be presented? Will all pupils have identical assignments throughout these 180 days? What attitudes and habits of working and thinking will result from these days together? How many pupils will develop skills in analysis and critical thinking? For how many pupils will the scientific attitude toward identifying and solving problems become part of their daily lives? How many pupils will pursue science further after these 180 days?

Not only are the number of days together important, but the number of pupils with whom the science teacher is expected to work is also significant. For the purpose of encouraging quality teaching throughout all the sciences, a number of schools have felt it wise to limit pupil enrollment to approximately one hundred pupils per teacher. Perhaps this should be a goal for more and more schools. If this is a reasonable and practical goal, it should not be hastily discarded as something too ideal toward which to work. Some day the slogan of science teachers, pupils, parents, and administrators might well be "One Hundred Pupils for 180 Days!"